

Message Text

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SUBJ: ITALIAN EVALUATION OF FEBRUARY 10-13, 1975 AGRICULTURAL
MINISTERIAL

PASS AGRICULTURE

1. SUMMARY, GOI, CONFAGRICOLTURA AND QUALITY PRESS EXPRESSED
SATISFACTION WITH AG PACKAGE APPROVED AT MARATHON FEB.
10-13 AG MINIST-
ERIAL. GOI OBJECTIVES RE "COMPENSATORY AMOUNTS,"
OLIVE OIL, DURUM WHEAT AND BEEF ATTAINED. MINISTER AGRICULTURE
MARCORA REPORTEDLY STATED NEXT MAJOR GOI OBJECTIVE IS INTERNAL
REFORM TO EXPEDITE AGRICULTURAL PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING
PROCESS IN ORDER UTILIZE EC FUNDS EFFECTIVELY. IN ARTICLE
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REPORTING SUCCESS AT BRUSSELS, PRESS NOTED EC'S FAILURE PROTECT

ITALIAN CITRUS GROWERS AGAINST PREFERENTIAL MEDITERRANEAN COMPETITION. END SUMMARY.

2. MINISTER AGRICULTURE MARCORA DESCRIBED DECISIONS REACHED AT MARATHON FEBRUARY 10-13, 1975 AG MINISTERIAL AS "SATISFACTORY FOR ITALY" AND "MEETING ITALY'S MINIMUM NEEDS." GOI ESPECIALLY PLEASED AT DECISIONS ON INTEGRATION FUND FOR OLIVE OIL (160 BILLION LIRE) AND DURUM WHEAT (68 BILLION LIRE)

AND CALF PREMIUMS (25 UA AT BIRTH AND 25 UA AFTER 12 MONTHS). ALL OF WHICH WERE "MUST OBJECTIVES IN SECTORS OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO ITALY. DECISIONS ON MONETARY MEASURES REVISING "COMPENSATORY AMOUNTS" ALSO WELCOMED BY GOI; WITHOUT THIS GOI COULD NOT RPT NOT HAVE ACCEPTED PRICE PROPOSALS.

3. CONFAGRICOLTURA SPOKESMEN CHARACTERIZED BRUSSELS AG PACKAGE AS "SUBSTANTIALLY POSITIVE." THE CONFEDERATION NOTED THAT "THE AGROMONETARY MEASURES ADOPTED, EVEN IF LESS THAN DESIRED, HAVE PERMITTED THE DIMINUTION OF COMPENSATORY AMOUNTS IN A MANNER PARTICULARLY INTERESTING FOR GERMAN-ITALIAN TRADE, ESPECIALLY REGARDING BEEF." ALSO SINGLED OUT AS "POSITIVE MEASURES" WERE THE DECISIONS ON OLIVE OIL, DURUM WHEAT, AND CALVES.

4. ONLY SOUR NOTE IN PRESS COVERAGE--AND UNRELATED TO BRUSSELS PACKAGE-- IS REFERENCE IN PRESTIGIOUS /CORRIERE DELLA SERA/ TO FAILURE OF COMMUNITY TO PRESERVE COMMUNITY PREFERENCES FOR ITALIAN CITRUS PRODUCTS. AS RESULT OF AGREEMENTS WITH SELECTED THIRD COUNTRIES, "THE COMMUNITY MARKET WILL CONTINUE TO BE INVADDED BY MAROCCAN ORANGES, SPANISH MANDARINS, AND ISRAELI GRAPEFRUIT, WITH GRAVE PREJUDICE TO SOUTHERN ITALIAN CITRUS GROWERS." COMMENT. IT IS GENERALLY RECOGNIZED, HOWEVER, THAT ITALY'S INEPT DISTRIBUTION AND MARKETING SYSTEM FOR CITRUS, AS WELL AS THE POOR QUALITY OF THE FRUIT, IS A FAR BIGGER FACTOR THAN THE PREFERENCES IN ITALY'S DECLINING SHARE OF THE EC MARKET WITH OFFSET, FURTHERMORE, BY SUBSIDIES TO THIRD COUNTRIES AND PENETRATION PREMIUMS TO OTHER EC COUNTRIES. END COMMENT.

5. IN BRUSSELS INTERVIEW CARRIED IN ALL MAJOR ITALIAN UNCLASSIFIED

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NEWSPAPERS, MARCORA SAID NEXT MAJOR OBJECTIVE FOR ITALY IS TO PUT ITS OWN HOUSE IN ORDER, REFERRING TO COMMISSIONER LARDINOIS' STATEMENT THAT, TO DATE, ITALY HAS NOT AVAILED ITSELF OF \$500 MILLION WORTH OF COMMUNITY FUNDS TO WHICH IT IS ENTITLED. HE ALSO CAUTIONED THAT "THE TRUE REFORM OF GREEN EUROPE WILL BEGIN ONLY WHEN THE NINE MEET IN THE SPRING TO DISCUSS THE ADJUSTMENT OF THE MECHANISMS OF THE CAP."

6. COMMENT. GOI ATTAINED ITS OBJECTIVES (SEE REFTTEL) AT AG MINISTERIAL AND HAS GOOD REASON TO BE SATISFIED WITH RESULTS. MARCORA'S COMMENTS ABOUT PUTTING OWN HOUSE IN ORDER MOST APPROPRIATE, BUT NECESSARY REFORM TO SPEED UP AGRICULTURAL PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING PROCESS WITHIN GOI WILL BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT GIVEN: (A) LARGE NUMBER OF MINISTRIES INVOLVED; (B) SHIFTING OF IMPLEMENTATION OF AGRICULTURAL POLICY DECISIONS TO THE REGIONS; AND (C) POLITICAL FIGHTING AMONG RIVAL FARM ORGANIZATIONS OVER WHERE PRIORITIES LIE. PRESS REMARKS ABOUT CITRUS ILLUSTRATE POLITICAL IMPORTANCE THIS SECTOR AND ARE GOOD INDICATION OF DIFFICULTY USG AND OTHERS WILL HAVE IN OBTAINING ANY FURTHER LIBERALIZATION OF EC CITRUS IMPORTS. VOLPE

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